

THE
COLLEGIAN
OF
KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY.

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THE COLLEGIAN

OF KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY.

"Educate your children and your Country is safe."

Vol. 2.—No. 2.

Lexington, Ky., June, 15, 1873.

No. 14.

THE COLLEGIAN

OF KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY.

SEMI-MONTHLY.

LEXINGTON, KY., - - - - JUNE 15, 1873

CIRCUMSTANCES MAKE THE MAN.

It has always been a prevalent sentiment that every man is the architect of his own fortune. How far this is true, we are not prepared to say; but that it is not *wholly* true, we have no hesitancy in affirming. That he is, to a *certain extent*, the founder of his own fortunes, and the arbiter of his own destiny, can not rationally be denied; yet there are in the life of almost every man many casualties and vicissitudes that not unfrequently turn the tide of his whole existence into a new channel, and make of him a man radically different from what he would have been, had those casualties never existed. Is this admitted? If so, there is need of no further discussion; if not, there is abundant proof.

What do we mean when we say that "labor conquers all things?" What *can* we mean? A moment's reflection will show this to be one of the broadest lies ever palmed off on credulous humanity. Is any one so short-sighted, or so utterly ignorant of human nature and human capability, as to believe, for one moment, that by labor any man may become just what he wishes to be? Surely none will be so bold as to assert that the rude swain, made clumsy and awkward by a life-time of toil and hardship, could ever, by an age of application, learn to touch the canvas with the delicacy of a Raphael or an Angelo. We can not conceive of the rough son of toil handling the chisel of Phidias, or the brush of Parrhasius; and he who can entertain the sentiment that any person, at the cost of unremitting application, can thrill the literary world with the dulcet harmony of poetic measures, has forgotten the old maxim, "*poeta nascitur non fit.*"

The truth is, men are differently endowed. One is born a poet, another an artist, another with capacities adapted to mercantile pursuits, while the great mass of the human family is gifted with but one talent, which no amount of labor on their part, can increase to an equality with those who are more bountifully endowed; and so long as each individual applies himself to the pursuit to which his

abilities are best adapted, just so long will his labor reap its full rewards, and produce the greatest product. Let him abandon his native element—his abilities are crippled, and the degree of his proficiency in any art sinks to a lower standard. As well, by a long course of training, attempt to make a first-class racer of a common truck-horse, as to attempt to make a first-class poet of one who is by nature incapacitated to fill such a position. Hence, the absurdity of the old and generally-accepted idea that labor conquers all things. It may lift us above the many petty cares and trials of the world, and teach us a higher source of enjoyment than we could have known without it; but it can never attain for us that dizzy height, beyond which we would have no desire to ascend, and which we would be willing to spend our lives in gaining.

Equally, or probably more absurd and false, is the impression that "where there is a will, there is a way." Every person has a will to be rich, but there is no way by which everybody may become rich. Everybody has a desire for social distinction, but the ways of obtaining such distinction are neither many nor easy. Probably ten thousand men have a desire to become President of the United States, but there is way for one in five hundred to attain the object of his desire.

Again, "nothing is impossible to him who wills." With reference to which, we might repeat what has just been said. In order that the maxim may prove true, his powers must be sufficient to carry his will into execution, otherwise his will is of no avail. That these false maxims have been the cause of much evil in the world, we presume will not be denied. Acting upon them, scores of young men have entered into the duties of life with the firm conviction that by an untiring exertion they could become just what they desired most to be. It is under such teachings as these that multitudes of men come up and enter into the walks of life for which they are by nature utterly incapacitated. The victims of these false impressions may be counted by thousands all over the world—men who have labored long and patiently to attain a position for which, when attained, they find they have no natural fitness—men who, in pursuit of an unattainable object, have lost their own individuality, and buried the talents which, if employed in a proper manner, would have produced an abundant harvest. If then, by saying that every man is the architect of his own fortune, it is meant that every man holds his destiny in his own hands, and

has the power of shaping that destiny as he pleases, the adherents to such a principle have committed the unpardonable error of overlooking, or of disregarding the constitutional differences existing between all of God's creatures. No two human beings are exactly similar in thought, or feeling, or personal appearance. They are created radically different, the one from the other. The nature of one is in direct antagonism with that of another, and human nature is an essential element in the consideration of man, individually as well as universally. And since nature is as inflexible as fate, and can be changed only by the hand of the Infinite, it is worse than folly for a man to attempt to accomplish a work for which his natural powers are insufficient; in other words, the man of little physical power, can not do the work of the man of great physical power, and the man of small brain can not do the work of the man of large brain.

We have an exalted opinion of the innate qualities and powers of the mind; we accept the statement that in the scale of being "man is but one degree below the angels;" his nature is fresh from the hand of God, and the soul partakes of the eternity of his Creator; but sin has become a constituent element of his being; a proneness to error has supplanted the original exactness of his life, and his mental vision has become so obscured that the most brilliant intellect finds it impossible to distinguish, in every instance, between right and wrong. Hence it is, that while a man struggles to rise in the world by his own unaided exertions, he is caught up by a tide of circumstances, and carried forward as the bubble is borne upon the babbling brook, or the foam upon the bosom of the heaving deep. Now, we would not argue that circumstances make the man in *every* case—there probably are exceptions to this, as to almost every other rule—but we *do* assert that in the great majority of instances, men owe their position—whether good or bad, honorable or dishonorable—almost entirely to the influences that have been thrown around them. Examples from every page of history might be cited as illustrations. It is more than probable, that, had Alexander, or Hannibal, or Cæsar, or Napoleon, lived in an era of profound peace, their names would never have found a place in the annals of the world; while, on the other hand, we do not doubt that the world has produced many men of greater strength of character, and more native genius than could be justly attributed to either of them. Men who, in their own souls, possessed an inexhaustible wealth of intellect, and who, with the proper material for the exercise of that intellect, could have filled the world with their fame, and left an imperishable record upon the pages of time. Many such men, we say, have doubtless lived, but from the lamentable fact of having had their lots cast in an age of mental stagnation—an age in which the wheels of progress were clogged by sloth and inaction, and which afforded no opportunity and no stimulus for the nurture and development of their own powers—have died as ordinary men of the world, and gone

down to the grave "unwept, unhonored, and unsung," leaving behind them nothing to prove their superiority to the common herd, or to testify that within that narrow compass of their own lives, there dwelt untold intensity of being, which needed only to be nurtured into maturity, to show its close analogy to the omnific energies of God.

In order to the full development of the mental faculties, there must be favoring circumstances. Times of peace and universal tranquility may be productive of domestic happiness and prosperity; but experience has proved that they are not the cradles in which are rocked the minds which shake the world. "Times of the greatest confusion and calamity have ever been productive of the mightiest minds. The purest ore is taken from the hottest furnace, and the brightest thunderbolt is elicited from the darkest storm." There must be material upon which the mind may expend its energies, otherwise these energies become dormant and inactive. Hence it is, that while political and religious commotions are fertile sources of evil and misery, they are yet the great prolific Nurseries of intellect, wherein are germinated the names that cannot die. It is evident then that, inasmuch as a man's abilities, either mental or physical, are entirely dependent upon the munificence of God; and since the development of those powers is left solely to himself, so that he may stunt their growth by allowing them to lie idle and unoccupied, or rear them into a ripe maturity by exercise and action—it is evident, I say, that that development is more or less perfect, according as the circumstances by which it is influenced, are more or less favorable. And while it may be urged that many men have risen to distinction without the aid of tutelage, have found their place and their work in the world as by an unsophisticated instinct, and have died leaving themselves immortalized in their own deeds—yet, if the true and full history of their lives were known, if all the secret influences by which they had been swayed were revealed, it is highly probable that it would *still* appear that circumstances made them what they were.

IS THERE A PLACE FOR ME?

This is a question that always presents itself to every young man who has any aspirations for usefulness. It makes but little difference how he is situated in life, whether rich or poor, ignorant or intelligent, the question *will* present itself, and *will* engage his attention until he makes his choice, till he settles in life; and now, how shall he know that there is room for him? This is a question that should not give any man trouble; yet, unfortunately, it does; and many a man looks back over an ill-spent life, and is puzzled to find that he has accomplished nothing; that he has done himself no good, and that he has left no good impression upon his fellows. In answer to this, we can but think, since God put us here, He put us here for a purpose, because he never works without something in view; nor, indeed, does he

ever create a being to be unhappy. Then he has given us a place, and more, he has given us a place in which we can be happy, a place in which we can make men feel that we have not loved in vain. But after making up our minds that there is a place for us, the question, "How shall I find that place?" presents more difficulties than the former. We presume that all persons have a vocation in view in early life. Some of these are but the fanciful shadows of the moment; and we flit from one to another, without any desire to remain with any of them. But then, there are others upon which we delight to ponder, all the inclinations of the mind seem to lead us towards some one grand object in life, some one thing to which we desire to give our life's labors. This inclination, we confidently think, is a sure guide, which, if faithfully followed, would make life a success, both a benefit to our fellow-creatures and a source of real, lasting pleasure to ourselves. And, again, after we find the lot assigned us, we must, as it were, "go on to perfection," or, interrogatively, "How shall I keep my position?" By what principles must I be governed that I may be successful? Life would not be drudgery if we but realized that the rules which govern it are not innumerable; but that they are few, and so plain that a child can understand them. If you are a farmer, plow deep, and look out for the weeds. If you are a merchant, be always at your post. If you are a lawyer, gather up the testimony. If you are a student, don't ride the pony; and if you are a preacher of the Gospel, let your life be as unselfish and as unaffected as was that of your Master. Or, in other words, be yourself. Do not be a half-way man in anything, and if this resolution is strictly kept, no man, with that contemptible elevation of the nose, will have reason to say of you, "he has missed his calling."

SELECTED FROM A

POEM

*Read at the Meeting of the Alumni Association of
Kentucky University,*

BY J. SOULE SMITH,

ON THE NIGHT OF TUESDAY, JUNE 10TH, 1873.

"What is she like, my Little Nell?
Ah well, Ah well—
What is she like? I cannot tell.
Sweet dimpled cheek, sweet eyes of blue,
Sweet little lips of cherry hue,
Sweet throat that lifteth her sweet face,
With gentle poise and easy grace,
Sweet brow whereon my lips have pressed
A lover's kiss, sweet hair caressed
So often by my lover hand,
Sweet form—the fairest in the land,
With slender foot and dimpled hand,
And waist round which the silken band
Doth nestle lovingly—Ah happy band
To be so placed!
Oh happy waist
To be so spanned!

No, no, I cannot tell
What she is like—my Little Nell;
But she hath grown so very sweet

That I would worship at her feet,
Had she not reached her little hand
And touched my own and bid me stand.
Had she not bended tender eyes,
All full of love and sweet surprise,
Upon my own; had she not—well,
Agreed to be my Little Nell."

A poor description, that, indeed, but then
The poor youth was in love and never thought
How changed the picture, were he wise enough
To see his Little Nell just as she is.
Ah me! 'tis pity that the wine of life
Is dashed with wormwood; but although we make
The wryest faces as we drink, we turn
To quaff it to the dregs again, for sake
Of one sweet sip of sugared foam afloat,
Upon the beaker. Love itself is not
Without its calomel and quinine, hard
To take, but apt to cool the fevered blood
And drive delusions from the heated brain.
'Tis very sweet to win approving smiles
From lips we love; 'tis sweeter still to win
A long drawn kiss; and woman's rounded arm
Makes no uncomfortable collar for
Our necks, although its owner puts our heads
In chancery and files her bill of costs.
But these sweets may not last; the honied lip
May bear its burden to some other hive;
The liquid voice may pipe another tune
In shrilly treble, and the cloven hoof
May peep from out the daintest petticoat.
Thinking of these things, when I read his rhymes,
I seemed to hear an echo to his verse,
Something like this—

Beware, beware of "Little Nell!"
Love leads to marriage, marriage—well,
What it leads to, why, she can tell—
Your mother-in-law.

Who'll mash your gorgeous Sunday hat
And foment every social spat
Betwixt yourself and wife? why, that
Same mother-in-law.

Who's sure to tell you you're a brute,
Ten times a day, and then to boot
Make many a bill for you to foot?
Your mother-in-law.

Who'll take delight to call you hog,
And scold your cat, and beat your dog,
And raise the very Gog-magog?
Your mother-in-law.

Who'll always "wonder where he goes,
The horrid man," and vow your nose
Caught not its color from the rose?
Your mother-in-law.

Who'll never, never go away,
Although you wish, day after day,
She'd go to Halifax and stay?
Your mother-in-law.

SCENE AFTER RECITATION.—Excited Fresh. (rushes
frantically to Prof. Atom and gasps:) "Did I, oh, did
I pass my examination?"
Prof. Atom (with proud scorn).—"No, sir!"
Off dances Freshie, radiant with smiles.
Prof. A.—"You misunderstand me; you failed, sir!"
Incorrigible Fresh.—"Ah! but I won a bet, you see."
Prof. A. staggers. Salts, &c.—*Advocate.*

A Yale Freshman, being treated by a friend to a dose
of paregoric, pronounced it excellent sherry! That
Freshman evidently passed a healthy infancy.—*Anvil.*

PAGE(S)
MISSING

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LEXINGTON, KY., - - - - JUNE 15, 1873

Commencement Week.

BACCALAUREATE ADDRESS.

President J. K. Patterson, of the A. and M. College, delivered a highly interesting address to the graduates, on the 8th inst. In this he pointed out many of the different relations that science has been made to sustain to religion in different ages, and showed that wherever truth has triumphed, though there might have been apparent discord, there was real harmony. He spoke, too, of the great analogies that exist in the natural and the material, the mental and the physical worlds, and of the many phrases truth presents to different orders of mind. There were some things in this part of the address that all of the audience, perhaps, would not endorse, but in the main, we think him correct in his views. Some of his ideas were common place, and we have heard them before, but he presented them in a style that made them interesting, nevertheless. The attendance was not so large as we have witnessed in the old chapel, but this was partly owing to a misunderstanding as to the time.

THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION.

Quite a large number of the Alumni of the University visited Lexington during commencement week, and all the meetings were well attended. It was a season of great joy to the gentlemen. What is more delightful, than, after a few years absence from College, to meet with a large number of old school-mates, and talk over the good old times; to recall the thousand and one incidents that are always delightful to remember.

The literary exercises of the Association took place Tuesday evening, June 10th, before a very large and unusually brilliant assembly, in old Morrison Chapel. The programme for the evening was two orations and two poems; but, one of the orators, Mr. Henry D. Laughlin, of St. Louis, was unavoidably engaged with business and could not come to Lexington.

A poem was read by Mr. J. Soule Smith, and it proved to be exceedingly popular. It was a medley of wisdom and humor. We publish in another place a part of Mr. Smith's poem, and if our space in this number would permit, we would give it all. The production was very well received by the audience, and the author was often unable to proceed for the protracted applause and mirth.

The only orator of the evening was Mr. Hayden Young, of Louisville. His subject was the "Real and Ideal," and was truly a fine production and worthy of the talented gentleman who delivered it. It was perhaps a little too metaphysical for a large number of his audience, but he received very close attention throughout. His delivery was fine, his manners and gestures were free, easy and graceful. Mr. Young was followed by his class-mate and chum of '70, Prof. W. B. Smith, who read a poem. We students expected great things from Prof. S., and we were not disappointed. His poem is called "A Vision of the Ages," and is written in blank verse, heroic measure. As we hope to find room in our next issue for the whole poem we will waive all comment.

Prof. A. R. Milligan presided, and opened the exercises with a brief speech, giving a general history of the Association.

ALUMNI SUPPER.

After the literary exercises, the Alumni, together with the invited guests, which included the faculties of the various Colleges of the University, met at the St. Nicholas Hotel, and sat down to a bountiful supper. Here mirth and good fellowship prevailed, and it was truly a pleasant reunion. As the Alumni is composed to a considerable extent of ministers, liquors were very properly eschewed, and the various toasts were drunk in clear, cold, God given water. Speeches were made by Profs. Pickett and Milligan, Dr. Pinkerton of old Transylvania, J. Soule Smith of the Press, Hayden Young of the legal fraternity, and C. B. Edgar of the COLLEGIAN. The speeches were excellent extempore efforts, and abounded in wit and humor, keeping "the table in a roar."

Altogether, the reunion of the Alumni was a perfect success, and an event never to be forgotten by the persons attending.

THE ANNUAL ADDRESS TO THE UNDERGRADUATES

Was delivered by President W. K. Pendleton, of Bethany College, West Virginia, Wednesday evening. It was plain and practical, as one would readily guess on reading his subject, "Dogmatism and its Cure." He first dwelt a little on the origin of the word, and its application, and humorously remarked that it had

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